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*L'entrepreneuriat en Haïti : identification des « zones d'ombre »*

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## Introduction

- 1 Entrepreneurship plays an important role in economic growth, innovation and in poverty alleviation in developing countries (Landes, 1998). Haiti, as a small island in the Caribbean sea, is not an exception to this phenomenon. Studies show that due to various internal and external factors, entrepreneurship businesses in Haiti have remained relatively small within their organisational structures thereby constraining economic development. As a result, they have still not been able to really take off (see for example, Séraphin and Butler, 2013; Séraphin, *et al.*, 2014; Gowreesunkar *et al.*, 2015). The Haitian elites who control commerce, strategic imports, hotels, telecommunication and banks have often been accused of being an obstacle to the country's development. Presumably, the classic role of the elite is usually one of investing in the country and generating economic activity, wealth, jobs and influencing the government to increase trade, promote productivity, ensure stability and protect investments. In contrast, the elite does not assume this role in Haiti (Roc, 2008).
- 2 The weak governance and absence of accountability has facilitated the creation of parallel economies and patronage patterns (Moita & Gauthier, 2010). This point is also observed in the work of Gowreesunkar *et al* (2015) and Page (1999) as they argue that in post colonial destinations like Haiti, Jamaica, Dominican Republic, and Mauritius, big enterprises particularly owned by the white continue to occupy the largest share of the economy. According to the online report of UNICEF (2016), 77% of the Haitian population are living below the poverty line with US \$1.25 a day and with low literacy (61% – 64% for males and 57% for females). Many Haitians are therefore underemployed with meagre wages (Lukhoba, 2013). As a result, this situation has led to survival, unproductive and

destructive forms of entrepreneurship (Séraphin, Butler and Gowreesunkar, 2015). For instance, 47% of the labour market works in private informal enterprises, out of which 39% are engaged in agriculture, 7.5% in private formal enterprises, 3% in public administration, 1.4% in state-owned enterprises and 1.2% for NGOs (Financial Times, 2015: 5). Working in the informal sector seems to suit the profile of most aspiring entrepreneurs as, this form of entrepreneurship does not require formal educational qualifications as stipulated in formal sectors. Presently, six sectors contribute to the economic growth of Haiti namely: (1) commerce, hotels, and restaurants (2) construction (3) transport and communication (4) manufacturing (5) non-retail services (6) other retail services (Financial Times, 2015: 5). The survival of Haiti is therefore, to a large extent, dependent on the performance of its entrepreneurship sector, a point also echoed in the study of Szerb (2016): the economic development of a nation is directly related to the performance of its entrepreneurship sector.

- 3 The Haitians society seem to be rooted in old practices (see for example, Pisani 2015; Seraphin and Butler, 2013; Seraphin, *et al.*, 2014 ; Gowreesunkar *et al.*, 2015 ; Gauthier & Moita, 2010; Roc, 2008). One theory that might help to explain resistance to changes in countries that have experienced abusive power relationships, ongoing poverty, prejudice, violence and natural disaster, is that of learned helplessness (Seligman and Maier, 1967). According to the authors, prolonged experiences of poverty or powerlessness tend to generate learned helplessness which in turn leads to a cessation in the exploration of the environment or engaging in change of behaviour (Mal, Jain & Yadav, 1990; Teodorescu & Erev, 2014). Learned helplessness is a state of mind causing people to attribute their situation to uncontrollable factors such as an innate lack of ability or to global factors that will never change making them feel powerless to change their circumstances. When we look at Haiti today, we can see that things have changed over the past several years, but in such a way that they have also remained the same like the poor governance of the country and the lack of opportunities for the locals (Séraphin, 2013a, 2013b).
- 4 Our research topic is therefore important from a theoretical point of view as it is going to identify those factors that are causing learned helplessness in the Haitian entrepreneurship sector. As a result, the originality of our approach consists in applying the Blakeley Model in order to identify the 'blind spots' of the entrepreneurship sector in Haiti. According to Blakeley (2007), failure to learn results in blind spots; blind spots refer to 'a regular tendency to repress, distort, dismiss or fail to notice information, views or ideas in a particular area that results in...[failure] to learn, change or grow in responses to changes in that area' (Blakeley, 2007: 6). Our research questions are guided by this philosophy: What are the blind spot in entrepreneurship in Haiti? What can be done to overcome these blind spots? The questions seem appropriate since it has been an ongoing debate among Haitian intellectuals and among academics specialised in this destination (Gauthier and Moita, 2010; Paul *et al.*, 2010; Roc, 2008; Lauthier, 2004).
- 5 Applying the Blakeley model will help to identify the deeper reasons (the one we do not see) why entrepreneurship has stagnated in Haiti. This innovativeness of the paper is two-fold: first, it uses a model that has never been applied to any entrepreneurship context; second, it makes inferences regarding the entrepreneurship sector in small island economies. Our research approach is inductive and exploratory in that we use theories and concepts and apply them to a small island economy. The discussion is therefore mainly derived from secondary data including those from available Haitian entrepreneurship case studies. Haiti was chosen as the study area for several reasons:

Our paper is structured around three main parts: In the first part, we will present the context of the research. Thereafter, we will provide a literature review on entrepreneurship and will compare the findings to the Haitian context. Finally, the Blakeley Model (2007) will be introduced as well as findings of applications of this model to the Haitian context.

## 1. Contextual Framework

### 1.1. Haiti: An overview

- 6 Haiti is a small island in the Caribbean sea and it is classified as a small island economy with a population of 10, 711 067 in 2015 (World Bank Development Indicators, 2016). As a post colonial island, Haiti was one of the poorest countries in the world. This is also evidenced in the UNICEF online report (2016) indicating that 77% of its population lives below the poverty line and has a very poor literacy rate. The country is also known as an unsafe destination due to its political instability. The negative image of the country neither attracted foreign investors nor encouraged any form of economic development. This is also confirmed in the study of Séraphin, (2012) which indicates that the negative image of the country has made difficult for the government to attract foreign investors. An earlier observation of Nunn and Wantchekon (2011) shows that the long term effects of slavery have a negative impact on the economic development and interpersonal trust levels in African countries that were involved in the slave trade.
- 7 According to Thomson, the image of Haiti has not always been negative. The country went through a severe economic crisis which developed into a socio-political crisis (Séraphin, 2011) and in the year 2010, an earthquake shook Haiti to its foundations and further damaged the tourism industry as most of the infrastructures and facilities of the sector were destroyed. The key issue of Haiti's development relies on the fact that Haiti has been lead so far by 'professional politicians' and not 'Presidents' with a genuine interest for the development of the country. According to the study of Séraphin (2014), the leadership of the country has often been questioned due to ongoing weak economic position of the island despite the changes of presidents governing the country (9 different presidents from 1990 to 2016). Wagner (2015: 258) strengthens this observation as he states: 'Over the next two hundred years, Haiti would endure long periods of political instability, increasing socioeconomic inequality, a nearly twenty-year occupation by US Marines, a nearly thirty-year dictatorship, several coups and military juntas, and an unrelenting series of foreign military, political, economic, religious, and humanitarian interventions (...) Haiti and its people have struggled for stability, sovereignty and democracy'. However, unlike the Northern Ireland, 'many Haitians retained their sense of community and cooperation, and remained generous, kind, decent, and indisputably, defiant alive (Wagner, 2015: 258). Thanks to the Haitian diaspora investments and Foreign Direct Investments, the hospitality sector quickly recovered from the earthquake (Séraphin, 2014).

## 1.2. The Haitians

- 8 As for the Haitians, Wagner (2015) depicts them as people who do not have any dream or hope. The only time Haitians dream is when they think about the USA. Haiti does not make its people dream or have hope about a brighter future. In other words, success for the Haitians can only happen beyond the boundaries of their country:
- ‘Nadou and I dream about Miami and all the things we will do once we are there together. Our dream get bigger and bigger, more exaggerated – We keep trying to come up with something bigger and better than the last time’ (Wagner, 2015: 25-26).
- 9 The Haitians are also depicted as people not being supported by their government:
- ‘Nobody would ever know we were poor’ (Wagner, 2015: 12).  
‘They can’t see me. A street child, uneducated, dirty and alone, as invisible as a little ghost’ (Wagner, 2015: 98).
- 10 Their basic needs are not fulfilled. To be able to perform well, entrepreneurs and more generally, people need to be in a context where their basic needs are fulfilled:
- ‘She is leaving. She is going to a better place – to a place where everyone has money, everyone has a car and a lawn and a flush toilet, where the streets are straight and flat and clean. To a place where she will go to university, and she can have a good life, where it will be easy to accomplish whatever she sets her mind to. To a place with no rubble and no makeshift tents. To a place without fear’ (Wagner, 2015: 43).
- 11 Brain drain (as opposed to brain gain) is also a major issue in Haiti. As explained by Séraphin (2012), the diaspora has a social responsibility toward the home country, but they do not systematically fulfil their role:
- ‘Don’t forget us. Don’t forget your country. You are going to a more beautiful place so that you can come back someday and work to make things more beautiful’ (Wagner, 2015: 43).
- 12 The Haitians live in the nostalgia of a past period. As Haitians do not see any bright future ahead of them, they keep looking backward:
- ‘Haiti is filthy now (...) everything used to be clean. Haitians were classy and respectful when Duvalier was still in control. Even though we were poor, we had dignity! The poor used to be happy. They didn’t think to ask why they didn’t have much. They didn’t know they were poor. They were happy and clean. Now they’re criminals (...) I want my life back’ (Wagner, 2015: 68-69).

## 1.3. Summary of key issues in Haiti over the years

- 13 Table 1 summarises the key issues of Haiti over the years. The most obvious interim conclusion is that nothing seems to have changed in the country and in the life of the people.

Table 1. Major issues in Haiti

Author(s)	Year	Title books/articles	Summary
Ève di Chiara	1988	<i>Le dossier Haïti, un pays en péril</i> [Haiti : A country in danger]	Haiti has endured centuries of instability, social and economic crisis

Manigat	1995a, 1995b	<i>La crise haïtienne contemporaine</i> [Contemporary Haitian crisis]	
Debray	2004	<i>La Face noire des lumières</i> [The dark side]	
Roc	2008	Haiti-Environnement: From the 'Pearl of the Antilles' to desolation	
Higate & Henry	2009	Insecure spaces, peacekeeping, power and performance in Haiti, Kosovo and Liberia.	Haiti is not a safe country
Audibert	2010	<i>Cinq siècles de tragedies</i> [Five centuries of tragedy]	Haiti has endured centuries of instability, social and economic crisis
Bonnet	2010	<i>L'île aux tragedies</i> [The tragic island]	Haiti has endured centuries of naturally and human induced crisis
Fleurimond	2010	<i>Tout un territoire à réorganiser</i> [A territory to reorganise]	Lack of leadership in Haiti Poor organisation of the country
Gauthier, A., Moita	2010	Vulnerability and causes of fragility in Haiti	Haiti has endured centuries of natural and human induced crisis
Geffrard	2010	<i>Un gouvernement sans forces ni moyens</i> [A powerless government]	Haiti does not have the mean of its ambitions
Girault	2010	<i>Deux cents ans de malheur</i> [Two hundred years of tragegy]	Haiti has endured centuries of naturally and human induced crisis
Broudic	2012	Security in Haiti: an impossible dialogue?	Haiti is not a safe country
Wagner	2015	Hold toght, don't let go	Lack of positive opening and perspective for the population Absence of leadership Brain drain to to extreme poverty

Source: The authors (derived from various sources)

- 14 Based on the above portrait of Haiti and the Haitians, it is legitimate to wonder is entrepreneurship can flourish in such a context. The following section is going to determine the indicators and determinant of entrepreneurial success and is going to

compare these determinants and factors to the Haitian context. Some conclusions will be drawn from the results.

## 2. Literature review

### 2.1. Overview of entrepreneurship

- 15 For Schumpeter (1934), entrepreneurship and therefore the entrepreneurs play an important role on the economic development of a country whether industrialised or developing (Robson and Bennett, 2000). Those entrepreneurs according to Schumpeter's theory have to be innovative by introducing new goods or a new quality of a good, introduce new method of production, open new market, development new source of supply or raw materials or half-manufactured goods. Cantillon has a much more simplistic view of the entrepreneur as he considers being an entrepreneur anyone who purchased a good at a certain price, used that good to produce a product and then sold the product at a certain price. Cantillon (1758) however included in his definition the notion of risk and adaptation to the market. Knight in his definition of 'entrepreneurship' also emphasises on the risk and uncertainty factors, but also add that being an entrepreneur means being able to take action in the face of unknown future events (Knight, 1921). For Drucker (1985), the 'risk' exists only for the so-called entrepreneurs who don't know what they are doing. In this line of thought, it is important to explain that entrepreneurs are socially embedded within the milieu in which they operate (Granovetter, 1985). They act according to local values and to what is available to them in terms of resources (Dodd & Anderson 2007).
- 16 Therefore, to understand entrepreneurial behavior, we need to consider the importance of the local social environment, because entrepreneurship is a socially embedded phenomenon. Thus, at a macro-level many elements have been found to provide a favourable environment for entrepreneurship such as a liberal market structure and dynamics (Van Stel, Storey & Thurik, 2007); easy access to financing (Welsh, Memili, Kaciak, Sadoon, 2014); a favorable government policy in terms of taxation, funding programs and a reduction in bureaucratic procedures related to starting a business (Ahmad & Xavier, 2011); and political and economic stability (Movahedi & Yaghoubi-Farani, 2012). Finally, internal conditions, in terms of experience, personal traits and aspirations complete the picture about factors that could potentially facilitate entrepreneurship (Krueger, 2007) and within this, access to formal education and training is a crucial element (Dabic et al., 2012).

### 2.2. Entrepreneurship in emerging countries

- 17 Emerging markets are those lower-income but rapid-growth countries that are using economic liberalisation as their primary engine of growth (Hoskinsson, Eden, Lau & Wright, 2000). The low socio-economic development of these countries were often due to political instability, great deal of conflicts during a short period, no sense of national identity among the people, economic crisis, natural disasters and the outbreak of diseases (Gould, 2011; Ritchie, Dorrell, Miller & Miller, 2004). The emerging countries are most of the time, post-colonial, post-conflict, or post-disaster destinations (Bayeh, 2015; Séraphin, 2014; Gould, 2011). They also fall into two groups: first, developing countries in

Asia, Latin America, Africa, the Middle East, and then, transition economies in the former Soviet Union and China (Hoskinsson, Eden, Lau & Wright, 2000).

- 18 The main issue of developing countries when it comes to entrepreneurship is their strategy for survival strategy (Mshenga & Owuor, 2010). Put in Bessant's and Tidd's (2011) way, they (Small and medium-sized enterprises) are inward looking, too busy fighting fires and dealing with today's crises to worry about emerging storm clouds on the horizon. Based on the fact that street-food and street-food vendors are particularly popular in countries like Africa, Asia and Latin America (Kowalczyk, 2014), which are also emerging destinations (Hoskinsson *et al.*, 2000), the above contextual framework is totally relevant. As for figure 1 (below), it provides a summary of the key points covered in this subsection.

**Figure 1. Indicators and determinants of entrepreneurial success**



Source: The authors (derived from various sources)

## 2.3. Entrepreneurship in Haiti

### 2.3.1. Literature supporting the fact Haitians are not entrepreneurs

- 19 For Schumpeter, entrepreneurship and therefore the entrepreneurs play an important role on the economic development of a country. Those entrepreneurs according to his theory have to be innovative by introducing new goods or a new quality of a good, introduce new method of production, open new market, development new source of supply or raw materials or half-manufactured goods. Cantillon had a much more simplistic view of the entrepreneur as he considered being an entrepreneur anyone who purchased a good at a certain price, used that good to produce a product and then sold the product at a certain price. Cantillon, however included in his definition the notion of risk and adaptation to the market. For him, successful entrepreneurs were those who managed to adapt the market and coped with risk and uncertainty better than the others (Cantillon, 1758). Knight in his definition of 'entrepreneurship' also emphasises on the risk and uncertainty factors, but also add that being an entrepreneur means being able to take action in the face of unknown future events (Knight, 1921). For Drucker (1985), the 'risk' exists only for the so-called entrepreneurs who don't know what they are doing.
- 20 If we combine those three definitions of 'entrepreneurship' some key points arise: Innovation, production, benefits, risk and uncertainty management. It is also very important to make it clear that there is a different between owning a business and being an entrepreneur (Cartland *et al.*, 1984). However, if there is something the academic community tends to increasingly agreed on, is the fact entrepreneurship is a crucial element in fostering economic development and growth. The Global Entrepreneurship



Monitor (GEM) study has found a statistically significant relationship between entrepreneurial activity and national economic growth (Huggins, Williams, in Carter, Jones-Evans, 2012). Quite interestingly, GEM views two main reasons why entrepreneurship is developing: The first one is 'necessity entrepreneurship'. In this case 'entrepreneurship' is considered as the best option available but not necessarily the preferred option. The second reason people or government consider 'entrepreneurship' is because opportunities are available: 'Opportunity entrepreneurship'. The latest defines those who engage in 'entrepreneurship' out of choice. That's where the topic of incongruities (what is and what ought to be, or between what is and what everybody assumes it to be) appears.

- 21 Those definitions and characteristics of 'entrepreneurs' and 'entrepreneurship' are arising many questions regarding the private and public sector initiatives in Haiti and their endeavour to develop entrepreneurship: (a) Based on the very high level of illiteracy and unemployment alighted by Barreau (2012), are the private and public sectors in Haiti misconceiving reality and making erroneous assumptions about the potential of Haitians to be entrepreneurs, as being an entrepreneurs requires having some particular skills (Carter, Jones-Evans, 2012)? (b) What is the real objective of the private and public sectors: The development of small and/or micro businesses or the development of entrepreneurs? As Cartland et al. (1984) clearly explained, there is a difference between entrepreneurship and small businesses. (c) As many attempts of the government to develop the economy has failed (i.e. encouraging FDI), is entrepreneurship viewed as 'necessity entrepreneurship' or 'Opportunity entrepreneurship' in Haiti?
- 22 If we consider the fact that most innovations in public-service institutions are imposed on them either by outsiders or by catastrophes, and if we also consider the fact that public sector tends to see their mission as a moral absolute rather than as economic (Drucker, 1985) we can assume that in the case of Haiti, developing entrepreneurship is at the same time an opportunity and a necessity for the government. (d) Despite the fact Drucker (1985) consider risks as being elements that can be controlled by good entrepreneurs, the risk factor still remains and in Haiti the risk factors are numerous and very high because of the political instability and level of insecurity (Higate, Henry, 2009) and there is no way to eliminate or reduce the element risk (Drucker, 1985). Despite all those risks present in Haiti, Thomson (2004) believes that Haitians have the venture (products, service, sales, ideas, etc.) but they don't have the "business" that is to say a viable, operating, organised organisation. Unless the venture develops into a new business, it will not survive (Drucker, 1985). The main issue in Haiti and other developing countries is that the strategy of so called entrepreneurs is a survival strategy (Owuor and Mshenga, 2010) meaning they have a short term vision instead of a long term one. Put in Bessant's and Tidd's (2011) way, they (Small and medium-sized enterprises) are inward looking, too busy fighting fires and dealing with today's crises to worry about emerging storm clouds on the horizon. This will be a consequent challenge for the Haitian government and the private sector. Both will have to be clear about: What they want to achieve and what needs to be done to achieve those objectives. When developing these types of initiatives, there are three potential outcomes to the newly established business: Either they are established but do not grow (a), grow slowly (b) and (c) ideally graduates to a larger size (Liedholm, Mead, 1999). The questions that need to be addressed are also: How to create the condition to breed successful entrepreneurs and to maximise their potential?

### 2.3.2. Literature supporting the fact Haitians are entrepreneurs

- 23 If the above literature review has identified some valid points to corroborate the fact Haitians are not entrepreneurs, another stream of the literature on entrepreneurship demonstrate the opposite. According to Sahlman *et al.* (1999), thinking entrepreneurially is essential to be an entrepreneur. Their definition of entrepreneurship also includes the importance of the management style that involves pursuing opportunities without regard to the resources currently controlled. According to the definition of Sahlman *et al.* (1999), the Haitians are promoters (as opposed to “trustee”) in terms of their strategic orientation as they are driven only by their perception of the opportunities that exist in their environment and are not constrained by the resources at hand. This strategic orientation requires being creative and innovative. Hence the reasons we believe the Haitians are entrepreneurs.

### 2.4. Theory on entrepreneurship vs reality of life in Haiti

- 24 From a methodological point of view this sections has adopted a Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA) approach. QCA is mainly used to study four issues: Internal organisational process; organisational external environment; overlap within and between organisational environments and finally promoting a methodological alternative (Kan, Adegbite, El Omari & Abdellatif, 2015). Our research research falls under the first three issues. More specifically, in this section we have carried out a Resource-based view (RBV) analysis (Wernerfelt, 1984; Penrose, 1959) to evaluate the competitive advantage of entrepreneurship in Haiti (table 2). These competitive advantages contribute to a firm competitiveness (Barney, 1991). These resources are also referred as assets that enable and facilitate the development of core competencies within the organisation if these resources are (Barney, 2002, cited in Lin, Tsai, Wu & Kiang, 2012). From our findings we can come to the conclusion that Haiti does not provide the right framework for the development of entrepreneurship, hence the quasi absence of indicators of the success of entrepreneurship (table 2). The following section is going to apply the Blakeley Model (2007) to the Haitian context in order to identify and understand the reasons behind the poor performance on entrepreneurship in Haiti.

**Table 2. Resource based view of entrepreneurship in Haiti**

Theory	Case of Haiti
<b>Indicators of entrepreneurial success</b>	
Innovation	No
Benefits	No
Adaptation to markets	No
Poverty alleviation	No
Socially embedded within the milieu	<b>Yes</b>

Job creation	Yes/No
Economic growth	No
Earning	No
Firm size	No
Survival	Yes
<b>Determinant of entrepreneurial success</b>	
Liberal market	Yes
Access to finance	No
Favorable government policy	No
Funding scheme	Yes/No
Economic stability	No

Source: The authors (derived from various sources)

### 3. The Blakeley Model

#### 3.1. Presentation of the Blakeley Model (2007)

25 The Blakeley Model was applied in research to address the question of how people learn or resist learning when their organisations go through change (Blakeley, 2007: 23). In so doing, two companies which were going through intensive culture change programmes were used as case studies. According to the Model, learning seems to constitute paying attention to a cue and changing behaviour (Blakeley, 2007: 27). If there is no change in the pattern, this is when blind spot is developed (Blakeley, 2007: 28). 'Blind spots' are areas where we resist learning and prevent us from adapting learning (Blakeley, 2007: 22). The Model suggests that learning often emerged through a stop-start process (Blakeley, 2007: 35) and proposed four main drivers of people's attention and learning:

- Self esteem (preserving, protecting and enhancing self esteem);
- Psychological comfort (the drive to achieve emotional well-being and psychological;
- Comfort (this also includes the drive to meet my underlying needs such as being liked, gaining influence, helping others. It is when we are meeting our underlying needs that we feel most fulfilled and comfortable);
- Goals (achieving my goals);
- Values (affirming and protecting my values in the world).

26 The Blakeley model is particularly relevant for situations that have stagnated for a long time and where changes are required. There is a general consensus that stagnation occurs when there is resistance to learn in the event of changes and people defend themselves against learning when the content of that learning is in some way uncomfortable or threatening to the self. Research has shown that prolonged experiences

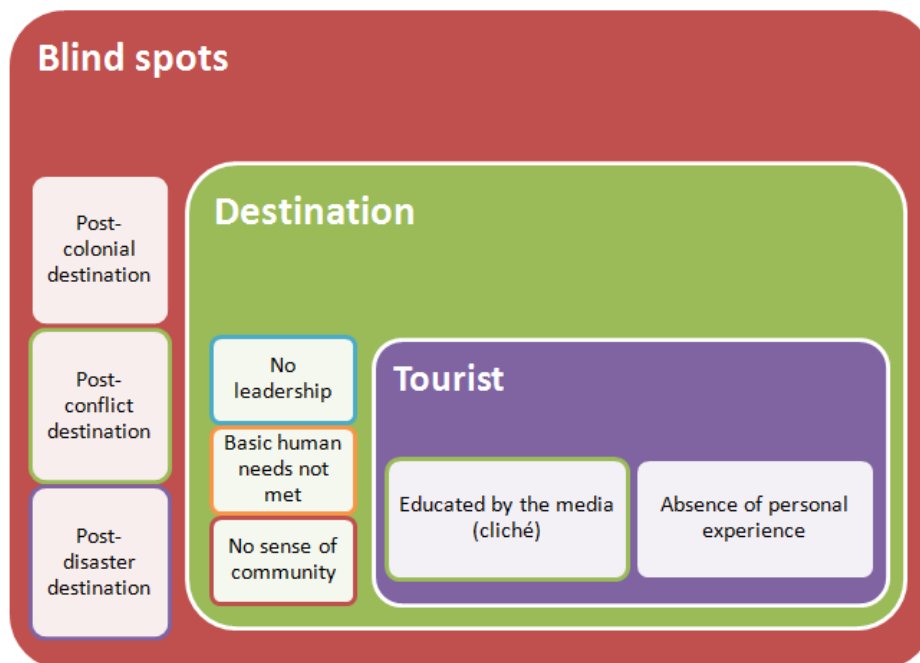
of poverty or powerlessness tends to generate learned helplessness which in turn leads to a cessation in the exploration of the environment or engaging in learning related behaviour (Mal, Jain & Yadav, 1990; Teodorescu & Erev, 2014). According to the Blakeley Model, failure to learn then results in blind spots which can be defined as 'a regular tendency to repress, distort, dismiss or fail to notice information, views or ideas in a particular area that results in...[failure] to learn, change or grow in responses to changes in that area' (Blakeley, 2007: 6).

- 27 There are many barriers to learning in any given economic system, some of which are systemic (e.g. lack of opportunity, a culture that does not support learning, lack of exposure to environmental change). When an individual (or system) fails to learn, representations and understandings of reality no longer function effectively as changes that have taken place in the environment fail to be incorporated into the learner's mental representations of the world (Barr, Stimpert & Huff, 1992). In order to understand how to overcome blind spots, it is important to appreciate the process of learning as a holistic, embedded and contextual experience (rather than limiting it to something specific such as the process of acquiring information or the acquisition of a skill). Learning, according to this model, comprises four key processes: paying attention to a cue, experiencing emotions, sense-making and generating behaviours in a way that results in new or changed beliefs, behaviours or emotional orientations (such as increased self-confidence or openness to change). This is not a linear process: for example it is not unlikely that emotions can be experienced first which trigger a change in behaviour and it is only afterwards that one makes sense of the event and only then that one consciously notices the original cue. Furthermore, noticing a cue, experiencing emotions, making sense and generating behaviour in response to the cue need not involve learning – indeed, these mechanisms simply describe the ongoing information processing characteristic of all human consciousness. Learning only results when the individual notices new and different cues, or makes sense of cues in a way that generates new constructs, beliefs, emotions or behaviours.
- 28 When individuals pay attention to familiar cues, experience customary emotions, make sense and take action in ways that involve no change then they are in the comfort zone, drawing on existing knowledge and skills in order to survive and achieve goals within the environment. When they pay attention to new cues, learn new emotions in relation to cues (e.g. increasing self-confidence in relation to a skill), make sense in ways that expand understanding and change behaviour, they step outside of the comfort zone and into the learning zone; here they start to experience a range of emotions, depending on how novel the learning or how threatening to the self. Emotions associated with the learning zone include excitement, anxiety, frustration, anticipation, optimism, disappointment, hope, joy and fear. If people do not step outside the comfort zone and engage with these emotions however, they do not learn; consequently one of the most important skills of learning is the effective handling of the emotions. The greater the ability to do this, the greater the learning that takes place; this then contributes towards the expansion of cognitive, emotional and behavioural resources that fit learners for the complex, changing world in which they live. Application of the Blakeley Model allows the identification of blind spots, that is, areas where people or organisations resist learning and prevent them from adapting learning (Blakeley, 2007: 22). The Blakeley model also offers a participative approach to find solution to the blind spots using a stop-start process (Blakeley, 2007: 35). The Blakeley model is quite flexible.

### 3.2. The Blakeley Model applied to the tourism sector in Haiti

- 29 After applying the Blakeley Model to the Haitian tourism context, Seraphin, Gowreesunkar and Ambaye (2016) came to the conclusion that in Haiti the problem of the tourism industry goes beyond tourism management skills (figure 2: Destinations' Blind Spots). It is first of all a human issue that needs to be addressed (the primary needs of the locals need to be met); the human aspect needs to be fixed (a sense of community needs to be developed and the locals need to be able to dream); and finally, Haiti needs visionary leaders (the right context needs to be put in place and the "yes, we can spirit" encouraged). It is the improvement of the well-being of Haitians that is going to lead to the improvement of the performance of Haiti as a destination. Subsequently, micro-businesses and SMEs in the industry will have an impact on the national economy. It is a one way relationship. In poor countries like Haiti it is important to address the human condition first.

Figure 2. Blind spots in Haiti

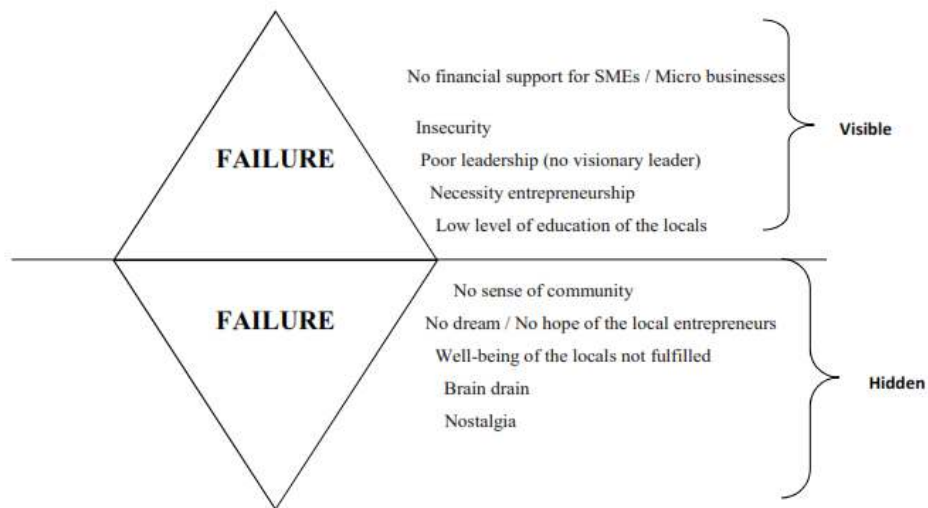


Source: Seraphin, Gowreesunkar & Ambaye (2016)

### 3.3. The Blakeley Model applied to the entrepreneurial context in Haiti

- 30 The blind spots in the tourism sector in Haiti are exactly the one holding Haitian entrepreneurs back as these blind spots are not specific to a sector but to a context. The blind spot in entrepreneurship in Haiti could be summarised as follow in figure 3.

Figure 3. Entrepreneurship Illusion in Haiti



Source: Authors

## Conclusion

- 31 The current research has been helpful to establish the 'blind spots' that have stagnated the Haitian entrepreneurship sector. The study reveals that prolonged experiences of poverty and powerlessness in Haiti have generated learned helplessness which in turn lead to a cessation in the exploration of the environment or engaging in learning related behavior. Applying the Blakeley model has helped to identify the 'blind spots' and hence, the deeper reasons why entrepreneurship in Haiti is stagnated and why Haitians entrepreneurs, locals, and their leaders resist learning.
- 32 The sources are found to be in visible and hidden areas and include lack of financial support, feeling of insecurity, poor leadership, lack of education no sense of community, poor vision among others. In order to ensure the success of entrepreneurship in Haiti, leaders, entrepreneurs, locals and government will therefore need to address changes proposed by the Visser Model (2015), namely unlocking change through: transformational leadership; enterprise reform; technology innovation; corporate transparency; stakeholders engagement; social responsibility; integrated value and finally, through future-fitness. The application of the Visser Model (2015) to the Haitian entrepreneurial context could be the topic of a future research paper.

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## ABSTRACTS

In countries that have experienced abusive power relationships, ongoing poverty, prejudice, violence and natural disaster, changes hardly happen and if they do, they are very slow. Haiti is not an exception. The problem of entrepreneurship in Haiti goes beyond human management and business management skills. It is first of all a human issue: The primary needs of the locals need to be met; a sense of community needs to be developed and the locals need to be able to dream; and finally, the right context needs to be put in place and the 'yes, we can spirit' encouraged. It is the improvement of the well-being of Haitians that is going to lead to the development of a strong entrepreneurial system. It is a one way relationship. In poor countries like Haiti it is important to address the human condition first. Unlocking change through: transformational leadership; enterprise reform; technology innovation; corporate transparency; stakeholders engagement; social responsibility; integrated value and finally, through future-fitness could be a potential option for Haiti.

Dans les pays qui ont fait et font l'expérience d'abus de pouvoir de leurs dirigeants ; qui sont empois à une pauvreté latente ; où les habitants sont constamment victimes d'abus et de maltraitements ; tout ceci édulcoré par des désastres naturels, on s'aperçoit que les changements sont inexistantes ou lents à venir. Haïti ne fait pas exception à cette règle. Dans ce pays, le problème de l'entrepreneuriat va bien au-delà d'un problème de ressources humaines et de gestion d'entreprise. La réalité est qu'il s'agit en premier lieu d'un problème lié à la condition humaine du fait que : les besoins fondamentaux ne sont pas satisfaits ; les habitants n'ont pas un sens d'appartenance à un groupe ; le rêve est proscrit ; le contexte n'est pas favorable et finalement un état d'esprit où le 'Yes we can' n'est pas encouragé. En somme, c'est l'amélioration de la condition humaine en Haïti qui conduira à un épanouissement de l'entrepreneuriat durable. Il s'agit là d'une condition sine qua non pour tous les pays ayant un profil similaire à Haïti. Ce changement au niveau de l'entrepreneuriat ne peut se produire que si les conditions suivantes sont réunies : un changement au niveau de l'édilité du pays ; une réforme du rôle de l'entreprise ; l'innovation technologique ; la transparence au niveau de la gestion des entreprises ; une participation de toutes les parties prenantes ; une reconnaissance de la responsabilité sociale des entreprises et la mise en place de valeurs.

## INDEX

**Geographical index:** Haïti

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